

BONZA NEWS

“The Birth of Lean” by K. Shimokawa & T. Fujimoto **Foreword to the book by Jim Womack, Lean Enterprise Institute**

Since the beginning of the Lean Enterprise Institute, we have been interested in the origins of lean. Scholars have written widely on this topic, and we have identified a number of volumes, including Takahiro Fujimoto’s *The Evolution of a Manufacturing System at Toyota*, to recommend to members of the lean community. But we had not heard from the actual creators—those present at the birth of lean in the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s—in their own words about just what they did and why they did it.

Fortunately, in *The Birth of Lean*, Fujimoto and Koichi Shimokawa have rectified this shortcoming. They have presented the insights of these Toyota pioneers through extensive interviews and annotated talks. This kind of personal commentary has never been available outside Japan. It comes to us through the editorial and translation efforts of long-time Toyota observer Brian Miller and Toyota veteran John Shook.

Although I have read practically all of the literature available in English on Toyota, I found the interviews, talks, and commentary in this vol-

ume enormously helpful in clarifying what actually happened and invaluable for those planning the path to lean transformation in their organizations. At a time when all of us are struggling to implement lean production and lean management, often with complex programs on an organization-wide basis, it is helpful to learn that the creators of lean had no grand plan and no company-wide program to install it. Instead, they were an army of line-manager experimenters trying to solve pressing business problems, in particular a lack of financial resources, to grow rapidly without accumulating large inventories.

Taiichi Ohno, Eiji Toyoda, Kikuo Suzumura, Masao Nemoto, and others you hear from here in their own words knew they could not solve their problems by employing the standard practices of large mass production organizations, as typified by General Motors. So they tried experiment after experiment, keeping careful notes on the results and spreading methods that worked.

Remarkably, they only came up with a name for what they discovered—the fabled Toyota Production

System—in 1970 after they had invented and deployed all of the elements. And they only created a program office—now the Operations Management Consulting Division—at about the same time, after the Toyota Production System had already taken hold throughout Toyota’s operations.

I found Toyota’s approach heartening for those of us who have discovered the hard way that big, top-down lean programs rarely achieve the desired results. And I was inspired to hear the stories of line-manager experimenters who pushed steadily ahead without a grand plan but in a consistent direction, often over intense opposition.

Surely we can all make progress using Toyota’s approach if we clearly define our business problems and go to the *gemba*—the workplace—to experiment. I hope that you, too, will be enlightened and inspired by this volume as we all continue on our hard but rewarding lean journeys.

NOTE: In Canada, you may purchase this book through Ocapt Business Books www.ocapt.com

(Bonza does not benefit from sales of this book).



QUOTE

“As sure as the Spring will follow the Winter – prosperity and economic growth will follow recession.” - **Bo Bennett**

GOOD NEWS!

13 March 2009
London, ON

Canadian Workers who have been affected by the current global economic crisis will receive support and assistance through four initiatives contained in Canada’s Economic Action Plan:

1. **Labour Market Development Agreements**
2. **The Strategic Training & Transition Fund**
3. **The Targeted Initiative for Older Workers**
4. **Support for Long-Tenured Workers**

For more information, please click here:

[Budget Initiatives](#)



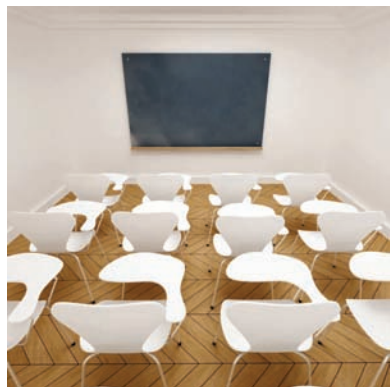
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Achieving Innovation & Manufacturing Excellence—AIME Initiative

A Training Grant Program for Ontario Manufacturers.

Features of the Program

In partnership with the Ontario Government, the **Yves Landry Foundation** is making available up to \$50,000 per project in the form of a grant to foster **training** that will lead to advancements in innovation within the manufacturing sector in Ontario. **Specific funding will be provided for two major objectives:**

Objective 1 --Training that will support the adaptation of new technology, new processes or procedures or any change within the company to support innovation. If a manufacturing company is adopting an innovative new process or concept in any area of its business, funding can be provided to share in the cost of retraining all involved employees.

Objective 2 --Training that will support and develop **highly skilled personnel** in any area that leads to innovation. This can include the development of new engineering skills, training in the use of new software, hardware or other tools necessary to support innovation, retraining to embrace new technologies, new manufacturing methods, or any other business area that will make an Ontario Manufacturing Company more competitive in the Global marketplace. Ultimately it should lead to a situation where the applicant develops or enhances a culture that supports constant training and development to support ongoing innovation in all areas of the business.

This funding is open to all Ontario Manufacturing companies in all segments that meet the following criteria:

- Between 15 - 1500 Employees**
- In business in Ontario for at least 3 years**
- Can demonstrate a solid financial footing**
- Manufacturing facility or facilities located in Ontario**
- Manufacture a specific product for sale in Ontario or elsewhere.**

If you would like more information about this program, please feel free to call.

The Simplified Lean Manufacturing Hands-On Workshop

Presented by Bonza Training Solutions & The Manufacturing Resources Group of Companies (MRGC®)

This workshop will provide you with a thorough understanding of **Lean Tools** and give you the opportunity to apply the tools and see first hand the results that can be achieved when you implement them.

A.M. Session—The “Toolbox” with Wayne Warwick

The “**Toolbox**” focuses on the following proven key Waste Free/Lean technologies and tools that assist enterprises to improve: “**Flexibility, Reliability and Predictability**” in manufacturing and non-manufacturing environments.

P.M. Session—The Test Drive with Len Jacobs

The “**Test Drive**” is a *practical hands-on* opportunity for you to apply Lean Tools and see the results that can be achieved when you implement them.

Workshop Fee: \$295 +GST

Locations: May 20, 2009—London, Ontario

June 17, 2009—Cobourg, Ontario

Please call or email for the full course outline. TOLL FREE: 877-508-5525